



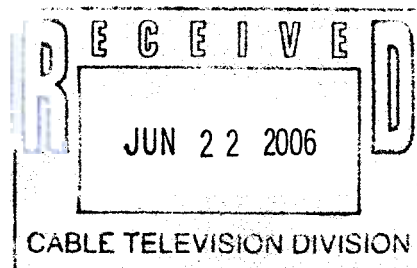
# TOWN OF WESTPORT

816 Main Road  
Massachusetts 02790

The Coastal Agricultural Resource Community of New England  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Tel. (508) 636-1003  
Town Administrator (508) 636-1150  
Fax. (508) 636-1147

June 13, 2006



Andrea Nixon, Clerk  
Cable Television Division  
Department of Telecommunications and Energy  
One South Station  
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

Dear Clerk Nixon,

The Town of Westport would like to register its strong opposition to Verizon's March 16, 2006 rulemaking petition filed with the Cable Division of the Department of Telecommunications and Energy. Verizon's petition proposes extremely unreasonable new rules for initial cable licensing.

The proposed rules would require a municipality to hold a public hearing on an initial cable television license application within 60 days of the application filing, and would require only 30 days from the time of the public hearing for the municipality to approve or disapprove the application, and issue the actual license in case of approval.

As most officials will tell you, it is impossible to conclude a proper initial license application review, negotiation, license drafting and issuance within 30 days of the public hearing. Such an initial licensing time frame would be untenable in the best of circumstances and is particularly untenable now in light of the many questions of first impression and complex issues raised by the non-standard terms and conditions commonly reported to be included in Verizon-proposed cable licenses.

As you know from RCN's initial licensing experience, cable operators willing to negotiate customary and standard cable licenses enjoy reasonable and fast municipal licensing. The existing license timetables have worked well for decades. They should not be changed at the behest of a single proponent. Note that Congress contemplated and provided for a three-year renewal process when it more comprehensively and carefully set forth cable licensing rules in the 1984 Cable Act. This framework worked well for decades and there is no rational basis for casting aside the time tested licensing rules and replacing them with radically abbreviated rules.

The Town of Westport was not able to get connectivity issues resolved in our original 15-year contract. In our renewal contract, we were finally able to get a provision into the contract that eliminated the fixed setback distance restriction on standard installations. Many homes in our Town are set back from the road a considerable distance, which had made the cost of installation prohibitive to many homeowners. The lifting of this restriction would not have been possible without local negotiation ability.

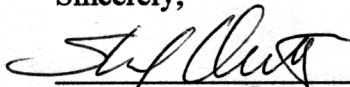
Municipal officials who are responsible for implementing licensing and who are accountable to the public are in opposition to these proposed rules. Municipal officials are concerned that under the proposed rules, our community and cities and towns across the state will be boxed into an untenable 30 day post-hearing licensing process, and will lose the ability to properly review and negotiate Verizon cable proposals. This is not even close to what is reasonably needed for a fair and reasonable licensing process. The Massachusetts Cable Division should reject the Verizon petition and allow local officials to continue serving their constituents as they have been doing for decades.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any further questions or desire further comment, please do not hesitate to contact us.

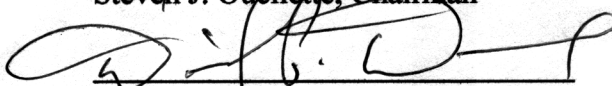
Please be aware that this Board has chosen J. Duncan Albert as our contact person in regards to this matter.

Thank you.

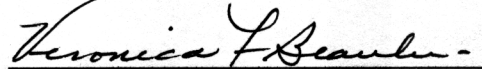
Sincerely,



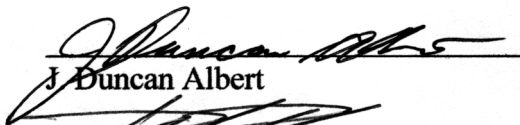
Steven J. Ouellette, Chairman



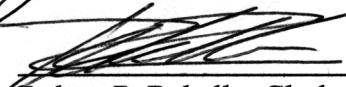
David P. Dionne, Vice Chairman



Veronica F. Beaulieu



J. Duncan Albert



Robert P. Rebello, Clerk

**WESTPORT BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
WESTPORT, MASSACHUSETTS**